DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 431 972 CE 079 004

TITLE	New Models and Metaphors for Human Resource Development.
PUB DATE	1999-03-00
NOTE	9p.; In: Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Conference Proceedings; see CE 078 963.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Business Administration; Educational Needs; Educational Practices; Human Resources; *Labor Force Development; Management Development; Metaphors; *Models; On the Job Training; Organizational Development; Outcomes of Education; *Staff Development; Teaching Methods; *Training Methods
IDENTIFIERS	*Customer Services

ABSTRACT

This document contains two reports from a poster session on new ideas and models in human resource development (HRD). The first presentation, "Two-way Customer-Service Provider Cycle" (Harriet V. Lawrence, Albert K. Wiswell), discusses a two-way supply cycle model that illustrates relational issues in customer service, including needs and wants, expectations, quality, timeliness, cost, requirements, discrepancies, and feedback. The second paper describes a session titled "Using Art to Explore a Metaphor for the Training Process" (Darren Short), in which the poster offered the visual metaphor of the transition of ice to water to steam for the potential effects of the training process on individuals. Conference attendees were invited to interpret the metaphor in light of their own human resource development experiences with employee training. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 431 972

Poster Session

New Models and Metaphors for Human Resource Development

This session will present visual representations of new ideas and models in HRD. Using posters as the basis of scholarly dialogue, this session will engage participants in reflection, interpretation, and discussion of new models and metaphors for HRD. The presenters listed below will be present at this session to discuss their work and facilitate scholarly dialogue based on their posters.

Two-way Customer Service Provider Cycle

Harriet V. Lawrence, Management By Communication

Albert K. Wiswell, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Using Art to Explore a Metaphor for the Training Process

Darren Short, Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

H Lawrence
D Short

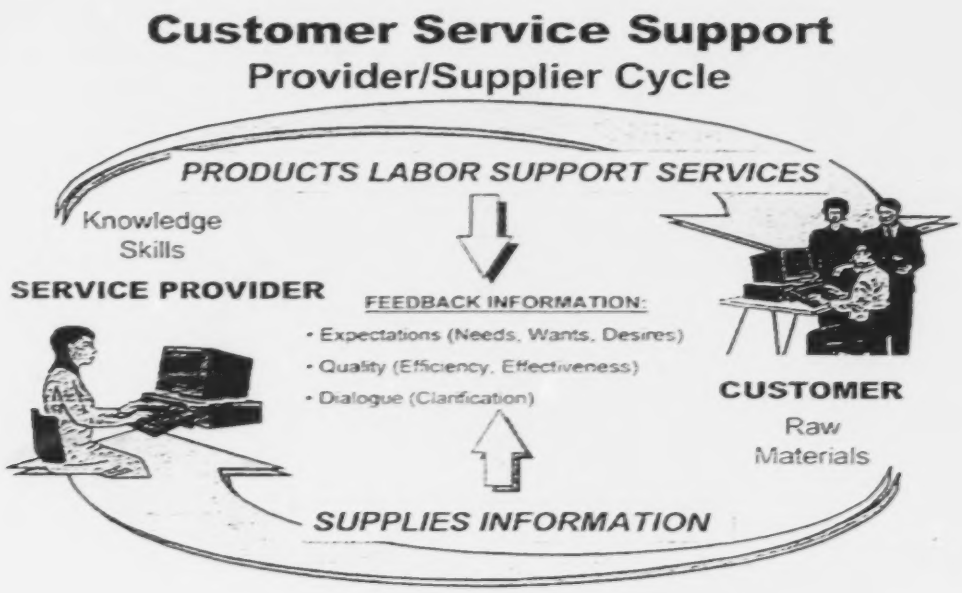
2A

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE 079 004

2-Way Customer-Service Provider Cycle

Harriet V. Lawrence
Albert K. Wiswell
Virginia Tech



Presenters Discussion

There are paradoxes in communicating a customer service orientation. First, responsiveness to customers can be detrimental when their needs are met beyond reasonable expectations. Second, who customers are can change depending on who is providing information, materials, services or products at a particular time. However, without satisfactory, ongoing dialogue and feedback throughout the service process, there are not likely to be "repeat" customers.

To provide a product or service to a customer, the customer's input is required. Importantly, this input needs to be solicited by the provider and given by the customer in a clear, complete, unambiguous and timely way. When this input on the part of both client and service provider falls short, then the result is often problematic.
This interactive model depicts responsibilities and transactions between the customer and service provider that must be communicated if optimal satisfaction is to occur. In this relationship, each party serves two interchangeable roles--sender and receiver of verbal and non-verbal information--but not necessarily at the same time.

A customer serves as a supplier when providing raw material to a contractor. A contractor serves as a recipient-customer specifying the requirements of the raw material and judging its quality; a contractor's work depends on communicating those factors.

Copyright © 1999 Harriet V. Lawrence and Albert K. Wiswell

Theoretical Base of the Model

Contemporary research into dialogue has taken a path through the human sciences (sociology, anthropology, communication, and psychology) as well as the physical sciences.

Martin Buber (1997), philosopher, described "dialogue" in 1914 as an interactive exchange between human beings who really listened to and mutually valued what each had to say to the other.

In 1957, Carl Rogers, psychologist--originator of "active listening"--held a dialogue with Buber where the back and forth conversation revealed a new self-awareness on the part of the participants, opening up new perceptions and shared meanings (1997).

David Bohm (1985), physicist, has contributed to a new way of understanding social organization and the workings of the human mind. Bohm believed our perceptions, meanings and communication are enfolded, one thought within another, so reality is never complete. Through dialogue, Bohm suggested that perceptions, assumptions, and "undiscussables" can be surfaced and clarified in a non-confrontational way. In an individual or group setting, Bohm believed a *collective mindfulness* could be maintained.

Kurt Lewin (Schein & Bennis, 1965) first used the word "feedback" in the late 1940s to underscore the necessity of feeding back the message to the sender so that the message could be adjusted or changed. Feedback influences decision making, problem solving, and information transmission; it creates energy and monitors automatic blaming. Chris Argyris (1985, 1993) described destructive attributions, defensive routines (model #1 theory-in-use) and the use of testing inferences (model #2 theory-in-use) for overcoming barriers to change in organizations.

This theoretical base and model is important to HRD in that it focuses on the breakdowns and problems between individuals and department teams that often take place during the internal customer service process. These problems in organizational communication reflect (a) ineffective (e.g., incomplete, inaccurate, unclear) human communication, and (b) conflicts and confrontations inherent in how differently people think and perceive "truth" in organizations. This model would inform decisions related to organizational development, training and interpersonal skills.

Poster Exhibition

This 2-way supply cycle model illustrates that the characteristics of a finished product depend largely on the tangible raw materials and the intangible issues affecting the two-way relationship. Some of these relational issues central to this model are the following:

- needs / wants
- expectations
- quality
- timeliness
- cost
- requirements
- discrepancies
- feedback

Customer-Contractor Transactions: A Dialogue Between T&D and Publications

Sally Turner has been in the publishing and printing business for 25 years. Respected as a no-nonsense, assertive, department head, Sally is known as a manager who communicates honestly. She catches up with Bill as he turns the corner mumbling to himself.

"Bill, what's happening?"

"Nothing much; that's the problem. I was counting on getting new configured PCs with our training video and course registration software. Now, it looks like it will be much later before its up and running for our use. The training center has been empty for the past two months waiting for the PCs and software. New employees and many other employees are waiting for training here and in the field."

"I can't promise when Information Systems (IS) will deliver. But I can promise my editors will work on your video and registration materials as soon as possible, Bill."

"What do you mean by *as soon as possible*, Sally?"

"I mean, as soon as we get your drafts, once the IS people have edited these materials, we can work with them to set up the catalogue like we always do."

Bill takes a deep breath: "I appreciate your willingness to listen to me and help me get this done sooner rather than later. Also, thanks for letting us make last minute changes last time."

"Glad you brought that up, Bill. Last minute changes are costly ones to make. So, we ask that you follow our procedures. Because the final binding and printing go outside, any last minute changes after the blueline is approved is an expensive proposition. You were out of town when your assistant asked to add two pages of programs. My department ate the supplier's extra costs. When that happens, we go over budget and eat into our profits from external sales which pay for services to internal customers like you. Can we count on the training department to follow the procedures outlined in the publications brochure?"

Dialoguing, as this example demonstrates, is a collaborative process where both parties share their meaning and inquire about their individual perceptions. This process helps to ensure that the transaction will be civil, non-confrontational and supportive of getting everyone's needs met.

Posted Guidelines

Here are some guidelines to support the customer-supplier provider partnership.

- Maintain a dialogue to build trust and openness; ask questions, suspend judgement
- Listen effectively to improve mutual understanding; share information, questions and concerns
- Work jointly to set goals, establish boundaries and plan action steps
- Streamline the time it takes to deliver services and material through action teams
- For the teams, select key people who are accountable for maintaining product and service quality
- Publish procedures so that suppliers and other parties can commit to achieving quality checkpoints
- Monitor changes to the customer service process, people, and tasks so you can make the necessary adjustments
- Use quality assurance and measurement control to attain and maintain standards
- Apply two-way feedback each step along the way

Clearly, customer service, especially among departments in organizations, has to be a two-way approach to be beneficial for both customer and service provider.

References

Anderson, R., & Cissna, K. (1997). *The Martin Buber-Carl Rogers dialogue.* NewYork: State University of New York Press.

Argyris, C. (1985). *Strategy, change and defensive routines.* Boston: Pitman.

Bohm, D. (1985). *Unfolding meaning: A weekend of dialogue.* London: Routledge.

Schein, E., & Bennis, W. (1965). *Personal and organizational change through group methods: The laboratory approach.* New York: Wiley.

Using Art to Explore a Metaphor for the Training Process

Darren Short
Office for National Statistics, London, England

The poster offers the visual metaphor of the transition of ice to water to steam for the potential effects of the training process on individuals. Conference attendees are invited to interpret the work, contrast the metaphor with their own, and comment in the journal attached to the easel. This short paper is a summary justification of the poster using references from the fields of HRD, adult education, and art.

Metaphor in Art and HRD

In non-visual forms, metaphors offer highly graphic mental pictures that enable the transformation of words from a context in which their use is literal to a context in which they provide an analogy (Palmer & Dunford, 1996). Metaphors therefore have the potential to make the complex simple, aid understanding, and provide ways of seeing and thinking, for example about organizations (Morgan, 1986). They are therefore a powerful tool for aiding and extending the understanding of a complex issue. Within organizations, metaphors promote communication of complex phenomena through creative symbolism (Brink, 1993). In many cases, art provides the source of those metaphors, and Palmer and Dunford (1996) referred to fifteen articles where metaphorical insights into either the practice or the teaching of management had been drawn from the arts, including from storytelling and literature, music, film, drama/theater, and art. Art in-turn also has a strong historical association with metaphor (Ades, 1994).

Building on the historical role of metaphor in both art and organizational issues, and the links between the two, the poster provides a visual representation of a proposed new metaphor appropriate to HRD. That metaphor focuses on the potential effects of the training process and is offered to promote discussion of its suitability and utility, and to provide new ways of seeing.

Ice, Water, and Steam

The journey metaphor is one of the most common, if not one of the central metaphors of Western culture, and is often used in an organizational context (Lackoff & Johnson, 1980). The metaphorical journey of the training process is portrayed in the poster using photographic transitional images of ice, water, and steam.

The pre-training or early-training individual is portrayed by a cube of ice. Cubes are a frequent metaphor in art and have been used to convey: the monotony of modular-determined units, the very opposite of freedom, and the equality of parts (Gablik, 1994); plasticity and lacking free-flowing (Green, 1994); and the suppression of the intimacy of detail (Fineberg, 1995).

Ice, or at least the concept of freezing, can be found in both adult education and HRD literature. Sugarman (cited in Merriam & Caffarella, 1991) described seven stages that accompany a wide range of transitions in adult education, the first being immobilization or a sense of being overwhelmed or frozen; Lewin also used freezing in his three stages of learning (described in Rothwell, Sullivan, & McLean, 1995).

Artistically, everyday objects are often used to reduce an artwork's appeal to strong emotions by reducing the association to the human figure (Green, 1994). Similarly, mass-produced goods are used by some artists to emphasize functionality rather than individuality (Lucie-Smith, 1994). Ice can be said to fall within both categories.

Combining the metaphorical properties of cubes and ice marries the monotony and suppression of the cube with the reduced emotion and hidden individuality of the ice. That combining produces an object indistinguishable from others of its kind and valued only for the function it performs. The symbolism is of a non-humanistic view of the pre-training individual who lacks freedom, has suppressed individuality, whose true potential has not yet been realized, and who is valued for the function performed.

The change of state from ice to liquid to steam symbolizes the transition of an individual through the training process. That change is depicted through a three dimensional poster – the third dimension being time (a similar argument to the fourth dimension used by constructivist sculptors - Barrett, 1994). Art has made little

Copyright © 1999 Darren Short

metaphorical use of steam, and so its use in the poster is not grounded in past works. Nevertheless, steam does have properties that make its use appropriate in the proposed metaphor and poster. Steam differs from ice in many respects, and water is a mid-point on the journey. Those differences include: the position of steam as the realized potential of both ice and water - steam is at a higher 'state' of being; steam's greater freedom and reduced restriction compared with the fixed position of ice or a container of water; steam's potential for impact over a far greater area and for impact on a greater number of people; steam's potential as a power-source; and steam's propensity to rise up whereas water and ice both fall (although not for ice in water).

The metaphor also raises deeper issues for discussion, such as: how to retain steam in its higher state; how to renew water to produce more steam; how to harness the potential of steam; how to renew the heat source; the importance of the energy required to heat the ice and water; and so on.

Of course, like all metaphors, this one is not perfect. As Palmer and Dunford (1996) stated, "it is important to recognize that any metaphor can only provide a partial insight. Two situations cannot be perfectly analogous without becoming one and the same, therefore understanding a situation via a transferred image must always be less than comprehensive" (pp. 8-9). In the case of the proposed metaphor, other properties of ice, water, and steam exist which would not fit comfortably with a description of the effects of training, for example steam tends to just disappear and it is usually more desirable to keep water in its existing state than to take it to its higher state. Nevertheless, similar problems exist with most metaphors, but their utility stems from their ability to open up new ways of seeing old situations (Lackoff & Johnson, 1980). The test for the proposed metaphor is whether or not it triggers such new ways of seeing.

Justification for the Presentation Style

The poster provides little detail other than of the main object. As Matisse stated, "all that is not useful in the picture is detrimental... for superfluous details would in the mind of the beholder, encroach upon the essential elements" (cited in Whitfield, 1994, p.24). The limited detail forces the viewer's focus away from the process, the heat source, to concentrate instead on the consequences of the process. For the same reasons, color is an unnecessary distraction from the process effects (and therefore follows on from some of the justifications used for the monochrome landscapes of Braque or paintings of Kline or de Kooning).

The use of photographs rather than painting or drawing reflects the increasing use of photography in art (Wolf, 1989) and the view of camerawork as not only reflecting the truth but also, by alterations or inaccurate reporting, as having the potential to report what else things are or might be (White, 1989). The photograph as art has the special attraction of combining the visual rhetoric of the picture with the actuality of the photograph (Weaver, 1989). The poster is therefore in-line with the artistic use of photography, seeks to show what might be as well as what is, and seeks to combine the reality of the photograph with the alternatives offered by visual metaphor.

Finally, in using the transition between natural states, the photographer has relinquished control of the work, letting the changing object determine the form of the art, as in the work of Huebler and Dibbet (Smith, 1994). The influence of natural laws on the training process is implied.

Questions for Conference Attendees

At the conference, a second poster will be used to prompt attendees to reflect on the one described in this paper. It will contain key words and questions, and attendees will be invited to comment on the posters in an attached journal. The three main prompting questions will be:

- How does the proposed metaphor provide you with new ways of seeing the effects of the training process?
- What do you gain from using the proposed metaphor?
- What other training process metaphors are you willing to share with the AHRD community?

References

Ades, D. (1994). Dada and surrealism. In N. Stangos (Ed.), *Concepts of modern art* (pp. 110-137). London: Thames and Hudson.

Barrett, C. (1994). Kinetic art. In N. Stangos (Ed.), *Concepts of modern art* (pp. 212-224). London: Thames and Hudson.

Brink, T. L. (1993). Metaphor as data in the study of organizations. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 2*, 4.

Fineberg, J. (1995). *Art since 1940: Strategies of being*. London: Laurence King Publishing.

Gablik, S. (1994). Minimalism. In N. Stangos (Ed.), *Concepts of modern art* (pp. 244-255). London: Thames and Hudson.

Green, C. (1994). Purism. In N. Stangos (Ed.), *Concepts of modern art* (pp. 79-84). London: Thames and Hudson.

Inns, D. (1996). Organisation development as a journey. In C. Oswick & D. Grant (Eds.), *Organisation development: Metaphorical explorations* (pp. 20-34). London: Pitman Publishing.

Lackoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lucie-Smith, E. (1994). Pop art. In N. Stangos (Ed.), *Concepts of modern art* (pp. 225-238). London: Thames and Hudson.

Merriam, S. B., & Caffarella, R. S. (1991). *Learning in adulthood*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of organization*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Palmer, I., & Dunford, R. (1996). Understanding organisations through metaphor. In C. Oswick & D. Grant (Eds.), *Organisation development: Metaphorical explorations* (pp. 7-19). London: Pitman Publishing.

Rothwell, W. J., Sullivan, R., & McLean, G. N. (1995). *Practicing organization development*. San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company.

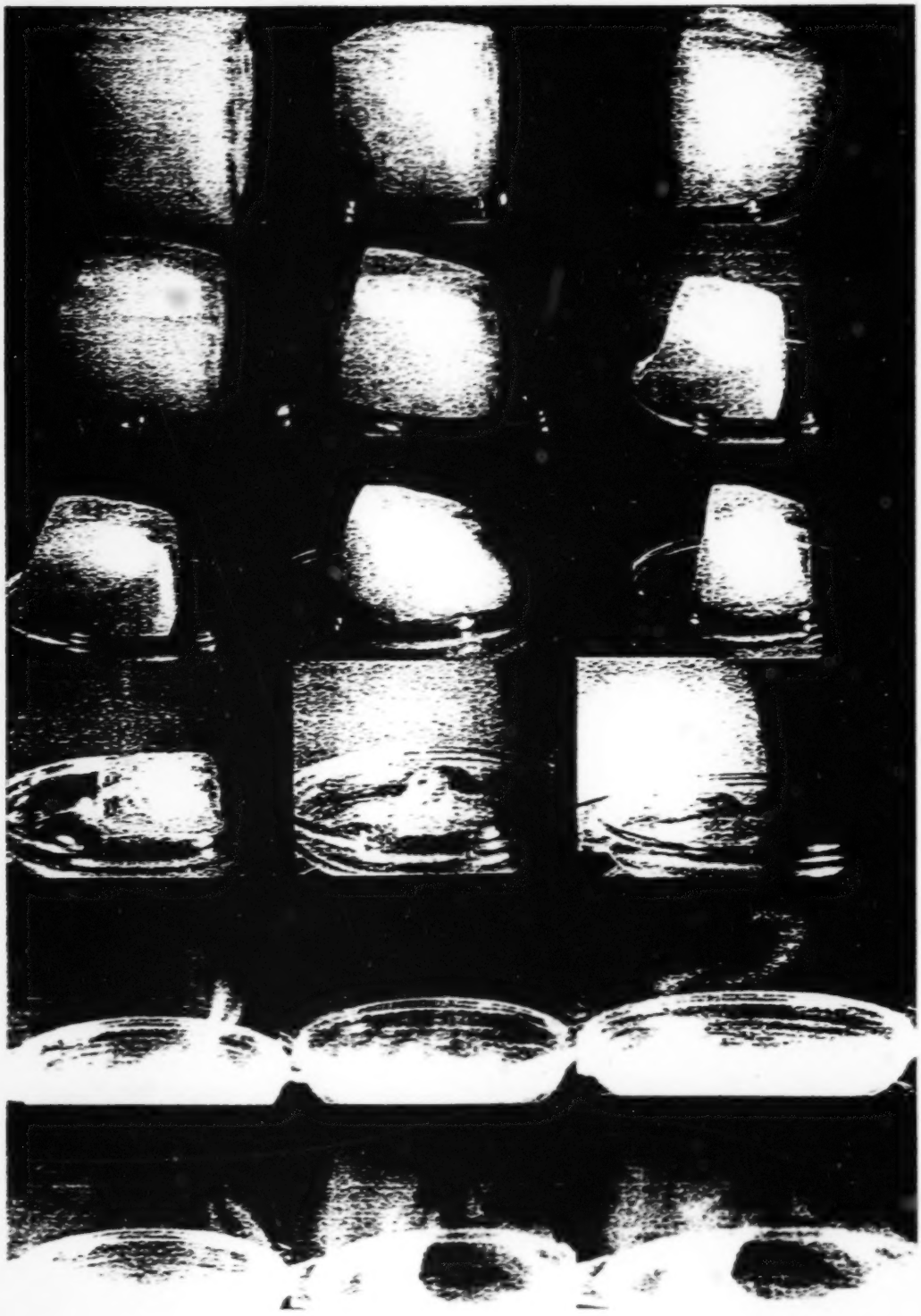
Smith, R. (1994). Conceptual art. In N. Stangos (Ed.), *Concepts of modern art* (pp. 256-270). London: Thames and Hudson.

Weaver, M. (1989). Prologue. In M. Weaver (Ed.),*The art of photography, 1839-1989* (pp.7-11). London: The Royal Academy of Arts.

White, M. (1989). Memorable fancies. In M. Weaver (Ed.), *The art of photography, 1839-1989* (pp.341-363). London: The Royal Academy of Arts.

Whitfield, S. (1994). Fauvism. In N. Stangos (Ed.), *Concepts of modern art* (pp. 11-29). London: Thames and Hudson.

Wolf, D. (1989). Introduction. In M. Weaver (Ed.), *The art of photography, 1839-1989* (pp.1-3). London: The Royal Academy of Arts.



BEST COPY AVAILABLE